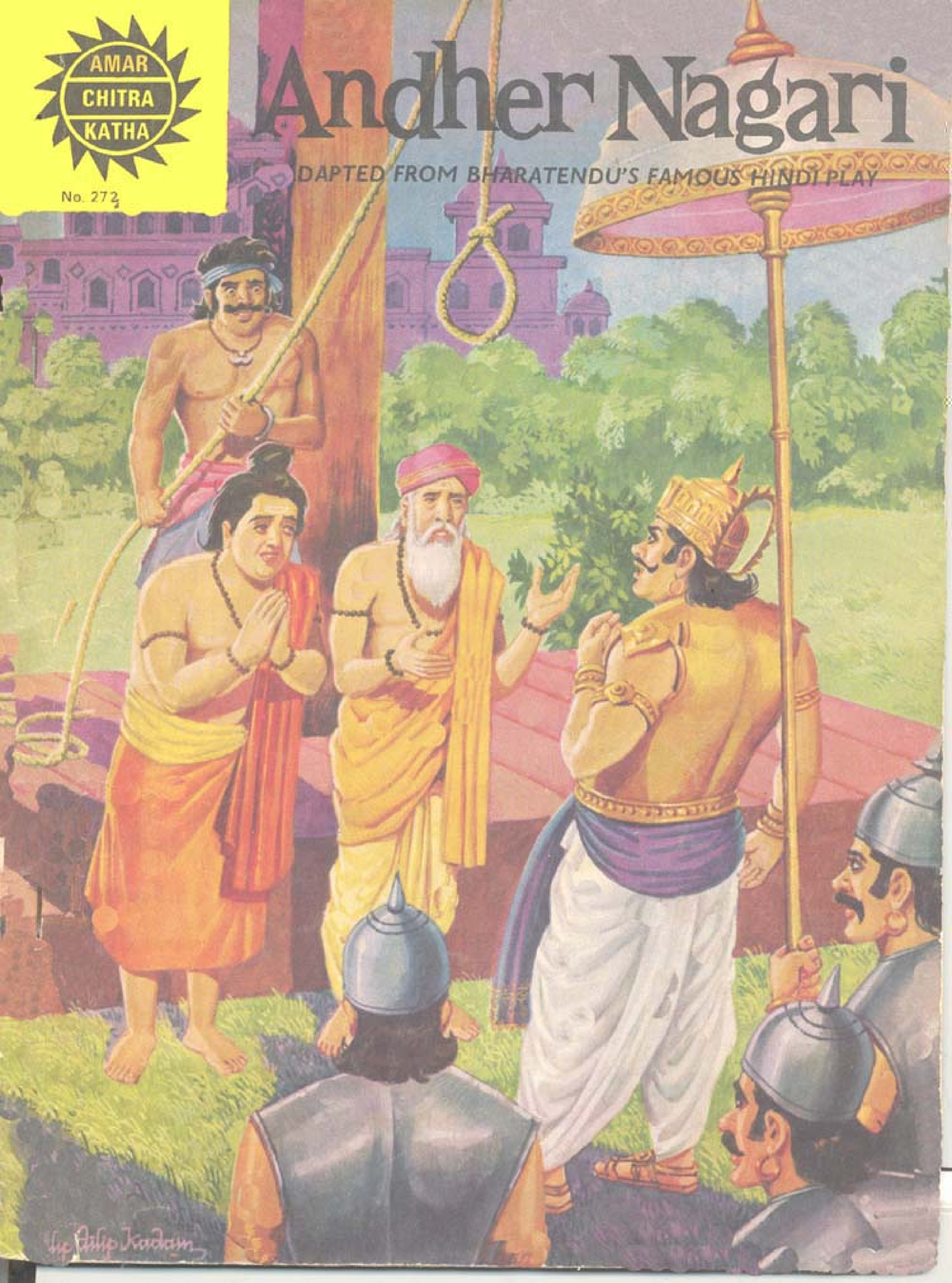

AMAR
CHITRA
KATHA
No. 272
Andher Nagari
DAPTED FROM BHARATENDU'S FAMOUS HINDI PLAY

ANDHER NAGARI

Bharatendu Harishchandra (1850–1885 A.D.) is known as the father of modern Hindi prose. This great author wrote 175 works in his short life-span of 35 years. These consist of poems, plays, stories and articles. Though the subject of his poetry was mainly love and Bhakti, he wrote a number of plays and poems that reflect the prevalent social conditions. He edited and published a Hindi magazine in which he advocated social reforms. His play, "Andher Nagari Chaupat Raja" is a delightful blend of didactism and entertainment.

The first story of this Amar Chitra Katha is based on Bharatendu's play, the text of which was made available to us by Smt. Shantidevi Motichandra. The play is based on a popular folktale of the time. The second story is another well-known folktale of North India.

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Andher Nagari
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Hazaar Maarya
Script : Sudha Nileshwar & Luis M. Fernandes


ANDHER NAGARI
ONCE UPON A TIME A WANDERING SADHU AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME TO A TOWN TO WHICH THEY HAD NEVER BEEN BEFORE.
WE ARE SURE TO GET A MEAL HERE. NARAYANDAS, YOU GO TO THE HOUSES IN THAT DIRECTION.
AND GOVARDHANDAS, YOU TO THOSE IN THIS DIRECTION.
SOMETIME LATER —
OH, NO! NOT MONEY AGAIN!
EVERYONE HAS DROPPED ONLY COINS INTO MY BOWL. I'LL HAVE TO BUY SOME FOOD.



*2 PAISE + 900 GMS. APPROXIMATELY



*VEGETABLES +A VARIETY OF SWEET


WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE GURU—
WELL, SON, YOUR BUNDLE SEEMS TO BE QUITE HEAVY! DID YOU VISIT MANY HOUSEHOLDS?
WELL, NOT EXACTLY, GURUJI. BUT WAIT TILL I TELL YOU ALL.
WHEN HE FINISHED HIS STORY—
ISN'T THIS TOWN GREAT, GURUJI?
NO, MY SON. NOT AT ALL!
BUT··· BUT···
PEOPLE HERE DO NOT SEEM TO KNOW THE VALUE OF THINGS. THEY SEEM TO BE FOOLS!
LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE.
GO AWAY?
BUT··· BUT I THINK THIS TOWN HAS NO PARALLEL! LIFE HERE WILL BE A BED OF ROSES!
PLEASE FORGIVE ME, GURUJI. I WOULD LIKE TO STAY.
STAY IF YOU WANT TO, MY SON. BUT BE ON YOUR GUARD.


NARAYANDAS, DO YOU, TOO, WISH TO STAY?
NO, GURUJI.
THEN LET US GO.
HE IS A GREAT MAN, NO DOUBT, BUT A SIMPLETON WHEN IT COMES TO PRACTICAL MATTERS.
AHA! ANDHER NAGARI IS GREAT! LONG LIVE CHAUPAT RAJA— THE WISEST AND THE FAIREST OF KINGS!
GOVARDHANDAS PERHAPS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO LAVISH IN HIS PRAISE OF THE KING IF HE COULD HAVE SEEN WHAT WAS HAPPENING AT THE PALACE AT THAT MOMENT.
JUSTICE! I WANT JUSTICE!


JUSTICE? DID SOMEONE ASK FOR JUSTICE? BRING HIM IN AT ONCE!
WHEN THE MAN WAS BROUGHT IN—
I WANT JUSTICE, MAHARAJ!
AND YOU SHALL HAVE IT. WHO HAS WRONGED YOU?
KALLU, THE GROCER, MAHARAJ. HIS WALL COLLAPSED AND MY GOAT... MY POOR, INNOCENT GOAT... WAS CRUSHED UNDER IT!
THE KING TURNED TO HIS MINISTER.
SUMMON KALLU'S WALL TO THE COURT! AT ONCE!
BUT MAHARAJ, THE WALL CAN'T BE BROUGHT HERE!
WHAT A PITY! NEVER MIND. CALL THE WALL'S NEXT OF KIN THEN.
A BRICK AND LIME WALL DOESN'T HAVE NEXT OF KIN, MAHARAJ.
JUSTICE, MAHARAJ!


ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! BRING KALLU HERE, IMMEDIATELY!
YES, MAHARAJ.
THE GROCER WAS BROUGHT TO THE PALACE.
YOUR NEIGHBOUR SAYS YOUR WALL COLLAPSED ON HIS GOAT.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?
IT... IT WAS NOT M-MY FAULT, MAHARAJ.
IF... IF THE CONTRACTOR HAD BUILT A STRONGER WALL IT WOULD NEVER HAVE COLLAPSED.
THE CONTRACTOR WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING.
THE WALL YOU BUILT COLLAPSED AND A GOAT WAS KILLED!
DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY IN YOUR DEFENCE?
YOU HAVE GOT THE WRONG MAN, MAHARAJ! IT'S THE WATER-CARRIER WHO IS TO BE BLAMED.



* POLICE CHIEF


BUT WHY SUCH POMP AND SHOW THAT THE BUTCHER'S ATTENTION WAS DIVERTED?
YES. WHY? ANSWER THAT!
BUT... BUT... YOUR MAJESTY...
NO BUTS... I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS.
TAKE THE KOTWAL AWAY AND HANG HIM! THE COURT IS DISMISSED!
MERCY, MAHARAJ! PLEASE HAVE PITY ON ME!
JUSTICE KNOWS NO MERCY! TAKE HIM AWAY.
THE UNFORTUNATE KOTWAL WAS LED TO THE GALLOWS.
LET ME GO! PLEASE LET ME GO!
PUT THE NOOSE ROUND HIS NECK!


I'LL NEVER WALK AROUND IN POMP AND SPLENDOUR AGAIN! I'LL BUY THAT MAN A NEW GOAT! I'LL...
SORRY! WE HAVE TO CARRY OUT THE KING'S ORDER.
GET ON WITH IT.
HELP! HELP!


LET ME DOWN!
SOMETHING IS WRONG SOMEWHERE. THE NOOSE...
IT'S THE NOOSE, SIR! IT'S TOO BIG FOR HIS THIN, SCRAWNY NECK.
DON'T YOU HAVE A SMALLER NOOSE?
NO, SIR.
THIS IS TERRIBLE! THE KING WILL BE FURIOUS IF THIS HANGING IS NOT CARRIED OUT.
MAY I OFFER A SUGGESTION, SIR?
WE CAN'T HANG THE KOTWAL BECAUSE HE IS TOO THIN.
WHAT A SERIOUS PROBLEM! I WILL HAVE TO CONSULT THE KING.

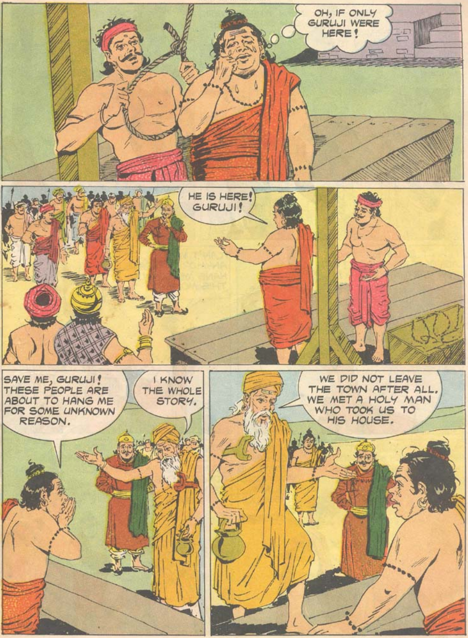

THE MINISTER WAS SOON BACK WITH THE KING'S ORDERS.
GO AND FIND A FAT MAN. AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT.
AND MAKE SURE HE HAS A THICK NECK.
THE SOLDIERS LOOKED EVERYWHERE FOR A FAT MAN...
...BUT ALL THE FAT MEN HAD GONE INTO HIDING.


IF WE DON'T FIND A FAT MAN SOON, THE KING WILL HANG US INSTEAD.
I CAN ALREADY FEEL THE NOOSE ROUND MY NECK.
LOOK A FAT MAN!
ANDHER... NAGARI... CHAUPAT... RAJA...
IT WAS GOVARDHANDAS. HE HAD EATEN ALL THE SWEETS AND HAD SETTLED DOWN TO SLEEP.
WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK!
TAKA... SER... SER... BHA... BHA...


HE'S ASLEEP! WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
HE'S JUST DOZING.
WAKE UP, FAT MAN!
EH? SOLDIERS!
GET UP! WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE.
THE HANGMAN IS WAITING.
HANGMAN?
I DON'T KNOW ANY HANGMAN.
YOU'LL KNOW ONE SOON ENOUGH.
WHAT DOES HE MEAN?


LOOK, BROTHERS, I AM A MAN OF GOD AND I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.
YOU'LL SOON BE DEPARTING FROM IT, SO IT DOESN'T MATTER.
I? DEPARTING FROM THE WORLD? SURELY THERE'S SOME MISTAKE.
HANGMAN? DEPARTING FROM THE WORLD?
Y-YOU MEAN I-I AM GOING TO BE... BE...
EXACTLY.
BUT WHY?
BECAUSE YOU ARE FAT.


BECAUSE I AM FAT?
DON'T GET UPSET.
SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THINGS. EVERY MAN WHO IS TO BE HANGED IS GRANTED A LAST WISH. SEE HOW LUCKY YOU ARE!
AH! HERE WE ARE! YOU CAN ASK FOR ANYTHING YOU WANT... ANYTHING! JUST IMAGINE!
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG? DID YOU HAVE TO FEED HIM TO FATTEN HIM?
GET HIM UP THERE QUICKLY!
YES, SIR.
AS GOVARDHANDAS WAS LED UP TO THE GALLOWS—
LISTEN, BROTHERS! PLEASE SPARE ME, I AM AN INNOCENT MAN! I WOULDN'T HURT A FLY! I...


OH, IF ONLY GURUJI WERE HERE!
HE IS HERE! GURUJI!
SAVE ME, GURUJI! THESE PEOPLE ARE ABOUT TO HANG ME FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON.
I KNOW THE WHOLE STORY.
WE DID NOT LEAVE THE TOWN AFTER ALL. WE MET A HOLY MAN WHO TOOK US TO HIS HOUSE.


MAY I HAVE A FEW WORDS WITH MY DISCIPLE IN PRIVATE? MY LAST SERMON TO HIM. YOU HAVE NO OBJECTION, I HOPE.
NONE, WHATSOEVER, HOLY ONE. PLEASE GO AHEAD.
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HOW ABSOLUTELY DIVINE! OH, HOW FORTUNATE I AM!
I CAN'T WAIT ANYMORE! PLEASE HANG ME SOON! THIS MOMENT!
NO, WAIT!
?
YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME, YOUR GURU. I MUST BE HANGED IN YOUR PLACE. PLEASE!
BUT YOU CAN'T DEPRIVE ME OF MY GOOD LUCK, GURUJI.
SON, I AM AN OLD MAN. YOU SHOULD CONCEDE THIS PRIVILEGE TO ME.
YOU FORGET IT WAS I WHO WAS SENTENCED.



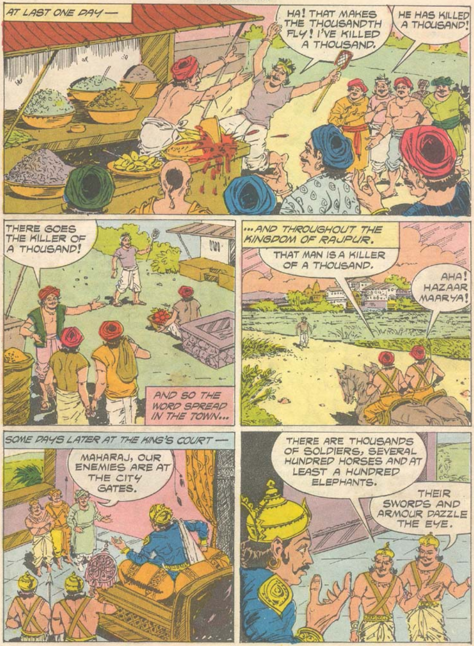
BESIDES, YOU ARE A SAINT. YOU'LL GO TO HEAVEN IN ANY CASE, WHEREAS THIS IS MY ONLY CHANCE.
?
?
JUST THEN—
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHY HAVEN'T YOU HANGED THIS MAN AS YET?
IT'S QUITE PUZZLING, MAHARAJ. BOTH, THIS MAN AND HIS GURU, ARE EQUALLY KEEN ON BEING HANGED.
MAHARAJ, I DESERVE TO BE HANGED. I WAS THE CHOSEN ONE.
DON'T LISTEN TO MY DISCIPLE, MAHARAJ. PLEASE HANG ME!
BUT WHY, O HOLY ONE? WHY DO YOU WANT TO DIE?
BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT NOBODY... NOBODY EXCEPT MY DISCIPLE... KNOWS.


AND WHAT IS IT?
WELL... YOUR MAJESTY... I HAVE DIVINED THAT WHOEVER DIES AT THIS MOMENT WILL GO STRAIGHT TO HEAVEN!
REALLY? THEN I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO BE HANGED.
NO, NO, NO! REMEMBER THE WALL FELL BECAUSE OF ME.
BUT I AM THE FAT ONE.
BE QUIET, ALL OF YOU! HOW DARE ANYONE TALK OF GOING TO HEAVEN WHEN I, THE SOVEREIGN, AM HERE! IT IS MY BIRTHRIGHT TO GO TO HEAVEN!
HANG ME! HANG ME, THIS MOMENT! I COMMAND YOU!
DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR HIM, MY CHILDREN. HE INVITED IT UPON HIMSELF.

HAZAAR MAARYA




FROM THAT DAY, BALU WAS A MAN WITH A MISSION. HE WOULD KILL FLIES WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE SAW THEM.
EVEN AT HOME, AT MEAL TIMES, HE DID NOT RELAX.
GOT THEM!
OH! YOU'VE SPILT MY DELICIOUS CURRY.
I HAVE KILLED SEVENTY-THREE FLIES TODAY.
JUST IMAGINE! SEVENTY—AHH!
GET OUT OF HERE!
I WONDER HOW MANY DAYS IT WOULD TAKE TO KILL A THOUSAND FLIES.


AT LAST ONE DAY —
HA! THAT MAKES THE THOUSANDTH FLY! I'VE KILLED A THOUSAND.
HE HAS KILLED A THOUSAND!
THERE GOES THE KILLER OF A THOUSAND!
AND SO THE WORD SPREAD IN THE TOWN...
...AND THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM OF RAJPUR.
THAT MAN IS A KILLER OF A THOUSAND.
AHA! HAZAAR MAARYA!
SOME DAYS LATER AT THE KING'S COURT —
MAHARAJ, OUR ENEMIES ARE AT THE CITY GATES.
THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS, SEVERAL HUNDRED HORSES AND AT LEAST A HUNDRED ELEPHANTS.
THEIR SWORDS AND ARMOUR DAZZLE THE EYE.

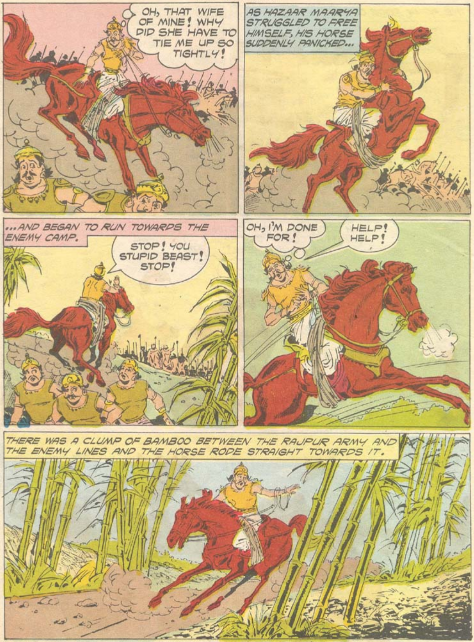


OUR ARMY IS STRONG ENOUGH, MAHARAJ. BUT WE LACK AN ABLE GENERAL.
SEND OUT A DOZEN MESSENGERS TO LOOK FOR A WORTHY MAN. HE SHOULD BE HERE BEFORE SUNDOWN.
THE SEARCH BEGAN. MESSENGERS WERE DESPATCHED TO EVERY CORNER OF THE KINGDOM.
ONE MESSENGER RODE TO THE MARKET-PLACE. THERE —
HERE COMES HAZAAR MAARYA!
HE'S THE GREAT WARRIOR WHO HAS KILLED A THOUSAND, ISN'T HE?
THE MESSENGER RUSHED BACK TO THE KING.
MAHARAJ, THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY SPEAK HIGHLY OF A BRAVE WARRIOR KNOWN AS HAZAAR MAARYA!
SUMMON HIM HERE!
VERY SOON, AT HAZAAR MAARYA'S COTTAGE —
O BRAVE WARRIOR, THE KING WISHES TO HONOUR YOU WITH A HIGH OFFICE.
A HIGH OFFICE?
PLEASE COME WITH ME TO THE PALACE.
CERTAINLY!
I MUST BE DREAMING!


LATER, AT THE PALACE—
SO YOU ARE THE FAMOUS HAZAAR MAARYA. WE ARE TOLD YOU HAVE KILLED A THOUSAND.
THAT'S TRUE, MAHARAJ.
I GIVE YOU THE COMMAND OF ALL MY ARMIES, AND ORDER YOU TO LEAD THEM TO VICTORY AGAINST OUR ENEMIES.
I SHALL DO MY BEST TO OBEY YOUR COMMANDS AND BRING GLORY TO YOU, MAHARAJ.
YOUR HORSE AND ARMOUR SHALL BE SENT TO YOUR COTTAGE.
YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, YOUR MAJESTY.
THAT NIGHT AT THE ENEMY CAMP—
DO YOU KNOW WHO IS TO LEAD THE ARMY OF RAJPUR TOMORROW?
IT'S HAZAAR MAARYA!
HAZAAR MAARYA... THE KILLER OF A THOUSAND.
THE NEWS SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE THROUGHOUT THE ENEMY CAMP.

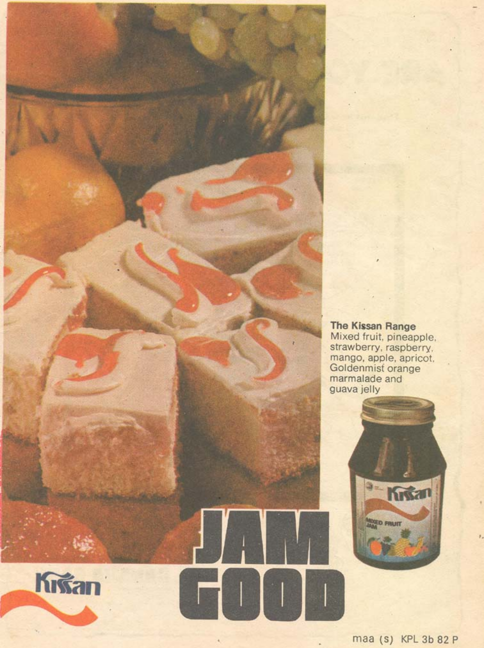

WHEN MORNING DAWNED—
I SHALL BRING VICTORY AND HONOUR TO RAJPUR TODAY.
INDEED YOU SHALL, MY LORD!
BUT I'D BETTER NOT TAKE ANY CHANCES. THE COWARD MIGHT JUMP OFF HIS HORSE AND RUN AWAY DURING THE BATTLE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I AM TYING YOU TO YOUR HORSE, MY LORD.
OTHERWISE IN YOUR EAGERNESS TO FIGHT YOU MIGHT JUMP OFF THE HORSE AND ATTACK THE ENEMY ON FOOT.
LATER AT THE PALACE GROUNDS—
WELCOME, BRAVE GENERAL! THIS IS YOUR ARMY. NOW LEAD IT TO VICTORY!
I SHALL DO MY BEST, MAHARAJ.


THE ARMY RODE OUT...
...TO THE BATTLEFIELD.
WHAT A HUGE ARMY THEY HAVE!
MY GOD, THEY ARE SHOOTING AT US! I... I COULD VERY EASILY GET HURT HERE!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, SIR?
RETREAT! I MEAN ATTACK! BUT LET'S NOT GO TOO CLOSE!
THE RAJPUR ARMY WAS SOON ROUTED.
MY SOLDIERS ARE RUNNING AWAY. I MUST SAVE MYSELF.


OH, THAT WIFE OF MINE! WHY DID SHE HAVE TO TIE ME UP SO TIGHTLY!
AS HAZAAR MAARYA STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF, HIS HORSE SUDDENLY PANICKED...
...AND BEGAN TO RUN TOWARDS THE ENEMY CAMP.
STOP! YOU STUPID BEAST! STOP!
OH, I'M DONE FOR!
HELP! HELP!
THERE WAS A CLUMP OF BAMBOO BETWEEN THE RAJPUR ARMY AND THE ENEMY LINES AND THE HORSE RODE STRAIGHT TOWARDS IT.


HAZAAR MAARYA CLUTCHED AT THE BAMBOO TREES TO SAVE HIMSELF...
...BUT THE STALKS WERE ROTTEN AT THE ROOTS AND CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS.
NOW MY END IS NEAR!
THE ENEMY SOLDIERS HOWEVER, WERE UNAWARE OF WHAT WAS REALLY HAPPENING. THEY THOUGHT HAZAAR MAARYA WAS COMING TO ATTACK THEM.
THAT MAN HAS NO FEAR!
SEE HOW FEROCIOUSLY HE'S WAVING THOSE BAMBOOS!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
RUN!
HE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO KILL A THOUSAND MEN SINGLE-HANDED!

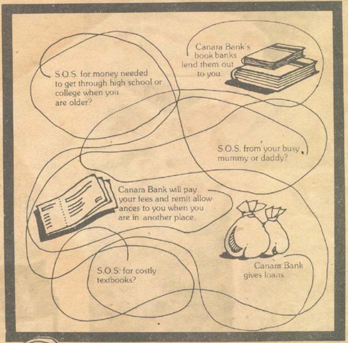

HE'LL SLAY ALL OF US! LET'S FLEE!
OUT OF MY WAY!
THEY ARE RUNNING AWAY! WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK!
STOP! AAH! THAT'S A GOOD BOY!
HAZAAR MAARYA KI JAI!
MAHARAJ KI JAI!
HAZAAR MAARYA LED US TO VICTORY!
LATER—
FOR THIS VICTORY AND FOR YOUR MATCHLESS BRAVERY, WE PRESENT YOU WITH A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD. AND YOU ARE APPOINTED COMMANDER OF OUR ARMY.
I AM HONOURED, YOUR MAJESTY.
THUS THE LAZY BALU BECAME THE BRAVE GENERAL, HAZAAR MAARYA, FAMOUS FOR HIS RARE COURAGE; AND FROM THAT DAY HE DIDN'T KILL A SINGLE FLY!


The Kissan Range
Mixed fruit, pineapple, strawberry, raspberry, mango, apple, apricot, Goldenmist orange marmalade and guava jelly
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MIXED FRUIT JAM
JAM GOOD
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S.O.S. MAZE





CANARA BANK
(A nationalised bank)

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For mummy and daddy
and me

Canbank's Nature Quiz

1. Why do woodpeckers peck at trees?
2. Why do some birds eat grit?
3. When do owls hunt?
4. Name a fish-eating bird starting with the letter C.
5. Name the only swimming bird.

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2. It helps them to digest hard foods.
3. At night.
4. Cormorant
5. Penguin.

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